THE AMERICAN

RATIONALIST

September, 1956

VOL. I • No. 3

OUR POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY *is best expressed by Alexander Pope in his "Essay on Man": 'Know then thyself. Presume not God to scan, the proper study of mankind is man."*

NEGATIVELY, *we stand with Jefferson, eternally hostile to all forms of tyranny over the minds of men.*

- **HAIL TO RATIONALISM**
  by Dr. Marius Hansome
- **WHERE ARE OUR RESERVES?**
  by Marie Harlowe
- **ATHEISM OUTMODED**
  by Harry E. Mongold
- **ESPERANTO**
  by George Falgier
- **WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?**
  by Arthur B. Hewson

The Jefferson Hall, Milwaukee

- **THE THREE R'S: REASON, REALISM, RATIONALITY**
  by Florence Van Swearengen
- **LET'S ORGANIZE OUR FREEDOM**
  An Editorial

A Magazine for the Entire Rationalist Movement

35c

NEWS OF THE MOVEMENT... BOOKS... COMMENTS

THE THREE R's:

Reason, Realism, Rationality

by Florence Van Swearengen

With the disturbing frequency during the past decade, educators throughout the nation have sounded warning signals. The danger: a developing public school crisis.

The issues are diverse but important: lack of decent schools, overcrowding of classrooms, federal aid to education, banning of books, attacks on texts and curricula, firing of "subversive" teachers, segregation or integration, released time and bible-reading, atom-bomb drills and dog tags.

The goal to gain control of the American child's mind. To accomplish this, extreme measures have been threatened, in some cases already taken.

The cult of ignorance made up of neo-fascist pressure groups, gaining new heart in the current tense political atmosphere, hope to strike out every last vestige of democratic thought, every impulse toward free inquiry; failing this, to abolish the free public schools altogether by withholding funds sufficient to operate them decently.

One group in this lunatic-fringe urged in 1939 that free public education be available only through the sixth grade, tuition to be charged students with loftier aspirations.

The handwriting on the wall was all too clear. The warnings have borne bitter fruits in the banning of books and courses and the firing of competent teachers. The result: an unprecedented fearful situation in the classroom.

"The ivory towers of learning are being changed into mere hutches for scared rabbits," was Dr. R. B. Kennan's doleful comment. The conference of the National Education Association at which he spoke as its secretary concluded with a resolution that "teachers must be allowed to present facts available **on any subject** and to express their personal opinions, so long as the instrument encourages students **to reach their own decisions.**"1 (my emphasis)

NEA's resolution pinpoints the danger underlying free inquiry.

If the student is permitted access to all available—and unadulterated — information isn't it possible that, in "reaching his own decisions" he might—God forbid—discard ancient and cherished myths long drummed into his head by clergy and parents? Even more horrendous, might he not question the authenticity of ninety percent of the pap daily served him as "news" on scarlet-bannered platters?

Liberal readers need only one guess to identify the pressure group leading the frenzied attack on public education: the One True Church, which flourishes only at the expense of a religiously ignorant populace. Its highly-vocal spokesman Frank Whalen, Asst. Supt. of N.Y. Public Schools in 1948, contended that "only Catholics can teach our American way of life" and urged that "more Catholics should become teachers."

Consequently over three hundred of the best — and non-Catholic — teachers in New York City have been felled by the Christian sword since 1948. The children — always the innocent victims — are "being taught today in the elementary schools by teachers... who have less than a four-year college

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BRADFORDVILLE PARENTS BACKED BY P.O.A.U. WIN SCHOOL BATTLE

By HUGH MORRIS
The Courier-Journal
Frankfort Bureau

Frankfort, Ky., June 22.—The Court of Appeals sharply rebuked the Marion County Board of Education today for closing Bradfordsville High School in 1954 and ordering its pupils to attend school at Lebanon.

The court said this action was arbitrary, capricious, and in excess of the School Board's powers.

The court ordered the Marion School Board to:

1. Stop violating the State law that forbids books and literature of the Roman Catholic Church to be distributed in the common schools.

2. Stop keeping sectarian periodicals in and about the libraries of the County schools.

3. Stop spending public-school funds for religious or sectarian purposes.

4. Stop the practice of halting school-bus runs on Catholic religious holidays that are not also legal State or national holidays.

Suit Brought by 460 Residents

Three of the five Marion County School Board members and the superintendent are of the Roman Catholic faith.

Of the 85 teachers employed in the school system when the suit was filed, 44 were Roman Catholic sisters. No Catholic sisters taught at Bradfordsville.

The Court of Appeals had ruled previously that garbed Catholic sisters are not forbidden to teach in Kentucky's public schools, provided they are qualified teachers. But an appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court on this issue is being contemplated by P.O.A.U. and cooperating council.

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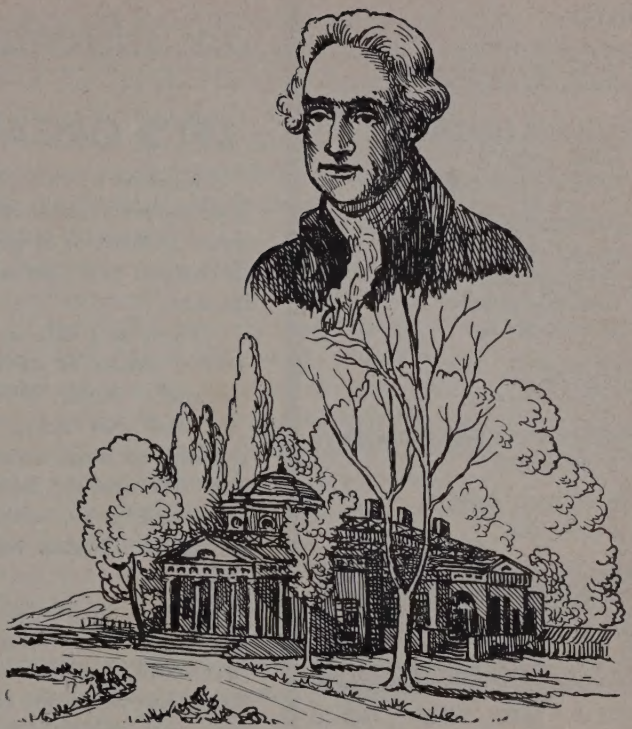
Tailor: "This is a fine suit, sir. Made of 100% virgin wool, and only $175.00."

Customer: "I'll take it. But forget about the sheep's morals."



THOMAS JEFFERSON OF MONTICELLO

The substance of what is known as "The American Dream" was compounded out of the vision and the ideals of this towering personality.

He broke the petty tyranny of the clergy and won the fight for religious freedom in America. He served his country well by bringing clerical influence in our society to its lowest ebb (1880). See editorial.

Why have we let it reach out for power once more?

Listen to what Jefferson wrote to his young nephew, Peter Carr:—

> "Your reason is now mature enough to examine religion . . . Shake off all the fears and servile prejudices, under which weak minds are servilely crouched. Fix reason firmly in the seat, and call to her tribunal every fact, every opinion. Question with boldness even the existence of God, because if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason than than of blindfolded fear.
>
> "You will naturally examine first the religion of our country. Read the Bible, then, as you would Livy or Tacitus . . . our own reason is the only oracle given you by heaven, and you are answerable not for the rightness, but the uprightness of the decision." And again, "Give up money, give up fame, give up science, give up the earth itsself and all it contains, rather than do an immoral act . . . From the practice of the purest virtue, you may be assured that you will derive the most sublime comforts in every moment of life, and in the moment of death."

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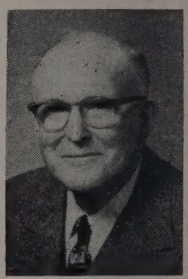
an editorial . . .

LET'S ORGANIZE OUR FREEDOM

Freedom of thought, of itself, is of little worth unless it is properly spear-headed. To be at all effective in the development of a genuine civilization out of the semi-barbarism and confusion of our day, it must have organization.



"There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken at its flood, leads on to fortune", wrote William Shakespeare. We had that flood-tide in the period during and immediately after the American Revolution and we Rationalists, then and there, missed a priceless opportunity. **Today we have our second chance.**

At the time of that Revolution, men's minds were in a state of hot ferment. They envisioned, first of all, a new America wherein its citizenry would be freed forever from the strait-jacket of feudal overlordship with its privileged class and its denial of equal opportunity for the commoner. However, the dynamic drive for human progress, which the political unrest and resentment of that period had unleashed, extended also into the field of religion. Having successfully challenged the validity of that clerical device,—the doctrine of the divine right of kings, the people were in the mood to challenge also the so-called "Men of God" who, for so long, had exerted a petty tyranny over them in the name of a religion which armed them with the whip of Fear.

Public thinking along these lines was reinforced strongly by the respect in which they held the leadership which had brought the Revolution to its successful conclusion. People knew that most of the men who made up that leadership had emancipated themselves from the ecclesiastical pretensions which priestcraft had contrived, in collaboration with the feudal state, to hold the mass of the people in subjection. The opinions of such men as Thos. Jefferson, T. Paine, Jas. Madison and Benjamin Franklin commanded confidence and broke the spell of Fear which bound them to the magic of supernaturalism.

We can realize the extent of this repudiation of orthodoxy when we note that Thomas Jefferson was elected President in spite of the fact that he was branded an

BEGIN CATHOLIC CENSUS OF INDIANA TOMORROW

From Chicago Daily news 2-25-56

What is called the largest single undertaking in the history of Indiana Catholics will get underway tomorrow.

Traveling in pairs, 30,000 Catholics will begin calling on each of the 1,2000,000 households in Indiana.

The canvassers, only men, will seek census data on all Catholics and invite persons without church affiliations and inactive Catholics to attend information forums.

The Forums, to begin March 4, will be held two nights a week for 12 weeks in 425 Catholic parishes in Indiana.

Parishes in Lake County and Ft. Wayne will participate later.

At the forums, priests will instruct on the teachings of the Catholic Church.

RELIGION is not to be discussed, Fred J. Schoettle said, but invitations to attend the forums and literature on the Catholic Church will be left in the homes.

Schoettle, of Indianapolis, is chairman of the executive committee of the Catholic Census and Information Program.

(Recently a management concern, after an exhaustive study, placed the Roman church near the top in administrative efficiency. The above bears that out. **Do I hear volunteers for a Rationalist census?) Ed.'s comment.**

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"atheist" by his political opponents. As further evidence, the Christian Science Sentinel is authority for the statement that the ratio of church membership to population in the year 1800 was a mere **6%**.

It was at this point that we missed our golden opportunity to substitute reality in religion for the miracle of the supernatural which for so long has been a drag upon human progress.

However, it is quite understandable that this should have happened as it did. Rudely awakened as they were to a realization that the basis for the religion in which they had placed their faith, was a hoax and a fraud, many went to the extreme of condemning all religion as unnecessary. In so doing, they failed to take into account that, if we are to have continuity to human progress, it must be implemented always by institutions which provide adult and juvenile education in some pattern for intelligent, purposeful living. This pattern, of course, must be ever evolving and thus making for greater understanding of our ever changing world.

The basis for such institutions necessarily involves a complete re-definition of the word "religion" by a return to one of its other reputed derivations which meant "to bind together".

After the Revolution, Thos. Paine manfully shattered the illusions created by the clergy with reference to the Bible. By disclosing its human errors and contradictions, he relegated it to its proper place as a compendium of the legendary history, the folklore, the poetry, together with the crude religious concepts and the philosophic pronouncements of the more intellectual Jews over a span of, perhaps, 1500 years extending from before the birth of Jeshua Ben Yoseph whose name, latinized, is Jesus to a few years thereafter. Paine, of course, was denounced by fanatical fundamentalists as an instrument of the devil. He also was long denied his deserved place in the American Hall of Fame because his critics had organization which we had not and have not yet developed.

When Emerson Channing and Parker timidly questioned the divinity of the man, Jesus, in some New England churches a hymn was sung which included this couplet,

"The Unitarian fiend expel
and drive his doctrines back to Hell'

The great iconoclast Robt. G. Ingersoll, who is still a hero to many of the oldsters among the Rationalists of today, further undermined the structure of fantasy and

mythology which clerics had fashioned to sustain their creeds and dogmas.

The grievous mistake in all of this was the failure of any one during the last 175 years to start a religious movement based on the positive concepts of Rationalism completely divorced from all Christian connotations. Everything was idol smashing instead—no constructive "binding together" in organized fellowship for the promotion of both individual and common weal has been seriously attempted.

During these last 175 years in each succeeding generaton, there have been many isolated individuals, mostly men reared in orthodox families, who have dared to question the creeds and dogmas of the Christian church. In so doing, their investigations usually have resulted in their winding up as Rationalists and non-conformists.

In the earlier years, in a society saturated always with clerical propaganda, these men were more or less ostracized and considered outcasts. They were married usually to orthodox women. Their children loved "dear old dad," but, because of the pressures for conformity in our society, they got to thinking "dad" had ideas that were a bit queer and, when he died, these children were absorbed once again into the conformist mass. These men's move away from slavish acceptance of ancient fantasies which have been a serious handicap to human progress, had ended in complete futility. It had meant only a life of frustration for those individuals who were courageous enough to refuse conformity with the obsolete ideas of the long ago.

However, during the later years as a result of gradual widening of intellectual horizons, there has been a steady erosion going on insofar as literal acceptance of orthodox creeds and dogmas are concerned. This is especially true in the more progressive Protestant denominations."

Very few of the more intelligent Protestants, when pinned down in discussion, will admit belief in a personal God. Their ideas on immortality are becoming increasingly vague. They have doubts on the efficacy of prayer and, while they will make weak attempts to support their beliefs by callings upon the Bible as their authority, their usual unfamiliarity with the Bible reveals that its reading is largely neglected. Very few can explain those tenets which differentiate their particular denomination from the scores of other Christian sects.

This all means that the continuing cohesion among the members of any free church and, even to a degree in the

RATIONALIST ORGANIZATIONS

The purpose of this column is to list all known rationalist, secularist and Freethought organizations that are democratically functioning in their area and which we can recommend to our readers. We like our friends to affiliate with local societies no matter under whose particular auspices they operate.

ARIZONA

ARIZONA SECULARISTS, (U. S. A.), P.O. Box 7271, Phoenix, Arizona.

CALIFORNIA

FREETHINKERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, Mr. Kolen, 2624 Maple Ave., Los Angeles, California.

Those in San Diego, write San Diego Freethinkers, c/o J. H. Johnson, P.O. Box 2832, San Diego 12, California.

NEW YORK

INGERSOLL FORUM, meets second Friday of month, 8 p.m. at the Pythian, 70th St., east of Broadway, New York City.

LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, 20 East 100th St., New York 29, N. Y.

NEW YORK CZECH RATIONALISTS, c/o Frank Hrbek, 4512 Liberty Ave., North Bergen, New Jersey.

PHILADELPHIA

FRIENDSHIP LIBERAL LEAGUE, 5526 Westford Road, Philadelphia 20, Pa.

CLEVELAND

CLEVELAND CZECH RATIONALISTS, Anton Belsam, 5149 Fowler, Cleveland 7, Ohio.

MICHIGAN

MICHIGAN LIBERAL LEAGUE, 23034 Donald, East Detroit, Michigan.

ST. LOUIS

RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

GERMAN SCHOOL ASS'N. AND FREE COMMUNITY OF N. ST. LOUIS, INC. 2218 St. Louis Ave.

TEXAS

CONGREGATION OF CZECH RATIONALISTS, 309½ E. 29th St., Houston, Texas.

WISCONSIN

FREIE GEMEINDE, Jefferson Hall, 261 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee, 6, Wisc

JEFFERSON FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY, 261 West Fond du lac Ave., Milwaukee 6, Wisc

RACINE CZECH RATIONALISTS, F. Laznicka, 1223 Erie St., Racine, Wisc.

CHICAGO

PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT, c/o V. Cejka, 2621 So. Highland Ave., Berwyn, Ill.

FREISINNIGE GEMEINDE, c/o Joe Braun, 3555 W. North St., Chicago 37.

CZECHOSLOVAK CONGREGATION OF FREETHINKERS, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23.

CHICAGO CHAPTER CRFA, 4236 W. Cermak Rd., Chicago 23, Ill.

CICERO CHAPTER CRFA, 5701 West 22nd Pl., Cicero, Ill.

THOMAS PAINE CHAPTER NO. 2, CRFA, 4236 W. Cermak Road, Chicago 23.

CZECH RATIONALIST FEDERATION OF AMERICA, 4236 W. Cermak Road, Chicago 23.

BOHEMIAN FREETHINKERS SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO, 2548 S. Homan Ave., Chicago 23, Ill.

WASHINGTON

SEATTLE SECULARIST SOCIETY, Mr. J. C. Leider, 5327 Fountain Street, Seattle, Washington.

•

In the following areas there are individuals who are working to form organizations.

Write the AMERICAN RATIONALIST for information.

NEW YORK STATE
WASHINGTON, D.C.
KANSAS
ALABAMA
IOWA
SPRINGFIELD, MO.
MINNESOTA

STAR LORE AND THE BIBLE

by Alex C. Ross

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Alex C. Ross
65 Perine St., Dansville, N.Y.

authoritarian churches, stems mainly from the social contacts and the satisfaction of the universal craving for a sense of belonging which there is provided for them.

As long as Rationalists lean to the negative and fail to provide those institutions which make available to all satisfactions similar to those provided by the churches—together with adequate adult and juvenile education in our positive ideals—just so long will The American Rationalist be "a voice crying in the wilderness" to another generation of those isolated and frustrated individuals referred to previously.

We want leadership to this end in every community. **This is our second chance.** Let's organize our freedom and, as a united dynamic movement, help inaugurate the beginnings of a real civilization free from the drag of a type of religion which is an actual opiate but rather providing instead one which is a stimulant to cooperative effort for a more liveable world in the "here and now".

Your editor urges that you send in names of friends who might be interested in an organized Rationalism.

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THE THREE R's:

Continued from page 2

education . . . (and in some cases not even two years of college.")

Obviously, still-employed teachers must measure up to requirements other than scholastic: they must be willing to look askance at controversial issues. Above all, they must continue to promote the aims of "the present school system (which) assures that the bulk of the lower class will (believe that)... equality is for the lower classes only to talk about and the upper classes to achieve."3

Discussion, debate, research, inquiry—the very foundation of a free public school system — have been declared taboo in favor of loaded questions illogically answered.

The success of this teaching technique is plainly evident. No need to look further than to the neighbor's school-age children; their indoctrination in preconceived notions, false reasoning, illogical conclusions has been thorough. No need to search or probe for "radical" passages in textbooks; they've been altered and tailormade to fit the current style in perjudices. No need to scan the shelves of public school libraries for books critical of vested interests — secular or religious; they've been replaced by slanted and distorted versions authored by religious ignoramuses, racists and reactionaries. No need to voice contrary — if heretical — opinions, nor cite experiences which belie the "facts" presented; the dissident will be classified and frowned upon by teacher and classmate.

Free inquiry, free discussion, free debate are thereby effectively discouraged.

The problem: how is the student to arrive at correct con-

clusions concerning vital questions affecting his life, his livelihood, indeed his ultimate survival?

The educators have not minced words. Forthrightly, they have given the prescription for the antidote against the poison of indoctrination:

"Instead of attacking the teachers today, what we need is to pay high tribute to those fine educators who have remained loyal to their country and to the children in their care in spite of the ruthless and unreasonable charges... made against them. Our schools . . . will be kept free it . . . American citizens insist upon the basic right and duty, of seeking the truth . . ."4

"The teachers must... present... opposing viewpoints... He cannot be expected to pass through scenes of raging controversy and passion with a serene curiosity, a suspended judgment and a pair of white gloves (nor) to know everything and believe nothing."5

"Teachers should take a clear stand on controversial issues..."6

"(They) must be discussed in the classroom."7

Again the question: If the student is denied access to opposing theories on controversial subjects, how can he uncover the hidden truths behind the burning issues of the day? If the tailor made "answers" to this question only puzzle him still further, how can his thinking be other than cloudy and muddled? If he has been denied the right to reach his own decisions, how can he reason objectively in trying to solve basic living problems?

The result of classroom suppression? A nationwide adult population steeped in intellectual poisons that eventually destroy not only the individual but everyman everywhere.

With the modern Sword of Damocles hanging ominously over our heads, the need today is for more and better teachers, educators staunchly insisting upon absolute freedom of inquiry and unprescribed classroom discussion on any subject whatsoever, no matter how controversial. The collective courage of honest, conscientious teachers may well form the solid front necessary to successfully combat the "anti-intellectual trend in our country which expresses itself in hostility to new or different or even traditional ideas."9

Educators have unselfishly taken a "clear stand." Laymen can do no less than follow their lead by "insisting upon the basic right and duty of seeking the truth." rejecting "false facts," illogical reasoning, unproved theories.

Well-informed, right-thinking, rational citizens have always pointed the way to progress, to a fuller, happier and more satisfying life for all mankind... and what better place to begin the development of rational thinking than in an atmosphere of free inquiry and discussion in the public school classroom?

1. Cincinnati (O.) Enquirer, 7-8-48
2. N. Y. Times, 2-28-49
3. Dr. W. B. Brookhover, Mich. State Coll. (N. Y. Sun, 12-30-48)
4. Dr. Richard B. Kennan, NEA (N. Y. Times, 10-28-53
5. N. Y. Times, 9-28-52
6. Progressive Education Assn. (Chicago Daily News, 12-1-47)
7. Dr. William E. Givens, NEA, 3-1-34
8. Time. 11-22-55, p. 47

'PRAY FOR PEACE' STAMP DRAWS FIRE

From Chicago Daily News

It is distinctly humiliating to have the government of our supposedly civilized nation committed to something so childish and ridiculous as the use of a "Pray for Peace" postal cancellation stamp.

Who makes war? Who else but the leaders of the nations when they feel it serves their country's best interests as they see them — in our case, after all means for maintaining peace have failed and war has been thrust upon us?

Who makes peace? Who else but those same leaders of the nation after victory or defeat?

To whom, therefore, do we pray? Do the leaders of the nation pray to themselves or to the leaders of the potential enemy?

What utter nonsense it this?

Arthur B. Hewson, Chicago..

Ed. Note: My final punch line was omitted:— "Are we savages that still believe in magic?"

•

CAN A CATHOLIC BECOME VICE PRESIDENT?

(Look, June 12)

...A full study of Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Mexico and most Latin American nations reveals why we in the United States do not want a Roman Catholic as our President or Vice-President, however noble and spotless the individual candidate may be. It is a mistake to permit the camel's nose of any kind of authoritarianism, political or ecclesiastical, to push itself under the tent of our highest offices.

Roy W. Thomas
Denver Colo.

LET US HAVE

your favorite Joke, Anecdote, Story, Quotation, Aphorism, Riddle, Proverb, Limerick, Poem etc., etc. for our

Anthology of Anti-Clerical Humor

RATIONALIST SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS
2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

Elmer Johnson, pictured after a recent leg injury due to a hit-and-run driver.

ELMER JOHNSON was born in the gay nineties in a small town in Wisconsin. Occupation: former chief engineer of a welded products company. Now employed in the engineering office of a steel fabricating plant. About thirty years ago he graduated from Methodism to Rationalism under the tutelage of Joseph McCabe. Is an active, aggressive freethinker. For several years he has been president of the Jefferson Freethought Society in Milwaukee, and is a frequent lecturer on rationalist and scientific subjects, and an occasional contributor to the pages of freethought papers.

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS CATHOLIC EXEMPTIONS

On June 7, 1956, the California Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of a state law passed by the legislation and approved after a referendum by a slim majority of the people, providing for tax exemption of religious schools. The matter has been pending before the courts for nearly four years. The Superior Court of Alameda County, California declared it unconstitutional. Its ruling has been reversed.

James Hervey Johnson
June 8, 1956

Hail To Rationalism!

by MARIUS HANSOME, PH. D.

Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see ourselves as ithers see us!

So wrote the great Scottish freethinking poet, Robert Burns. He put his finger on the very quality that differentiates human beings from the brute creation. Man can review his thinking and doing from different points of view including "what **they** will think or say." The American Rationalist, no doubt, will give space and ample scope to the re-thinking so much needed in various areas of modern life. One problem now is to make the world safe for difference through mutual agreement. Agreement gives power and initiative.

The sociological discovery that differences need not necessarily be a disruptive influence but may be made to yield a richer unity invites cultivation. A working harmony of differences offers the possibility of a variant solidarity.

Good teachers search for the growth points in human nature. Biologists are hot on the trail to ferret out the nature of cell growth and development. Psychologists know much about communication and the principles of learning. Rationalists and humanists must become more active in the role of a catalytic element that excites growth of a better pattern in the societal tissues. In the endeavor to excel the great pioneer freethinkers, we shall honor their work and carry it forward. The dispelling of the old certainties which newer knowledge have shown to be untrue must go on ceaselessly.

From Epicurus to Einstein the clearing in the intellectual jungle is constantly expanding. One by one the ancient and highly reputable errors, the hallowed but unfounded assumptions regarding both physical and human nature are being uprooted.

Darwin made the delightfully naive fairy tale of Adam and Eve legendary. Newton made us earthbound. Geologists and astronomers shifted the ecclesiastical, geographical locust of heaven and hell. Marx revolutionized social thought. Veblen's seminal thinking glorified work and technology. Einstein clarified the principle of unity in diversity. Dewey cleared away the medieval debris which like a mass of lead weighed down upon the human brain. Lester Frank Ward displaced the Unseen Guiding Hand when he confidently asserted: "Society can direct itself. No divinity is necessary to shape our ends or devise our means." Continue the roll call yourself.

These men were true intellectals who conceived their function to be the removal of obstacles and to tidy the way for the forward movement of mankind. They are the heralds of better life and the real ornaments of human history.

Stodgy theologians, cynical ecclesiastics still maintain that human nature is totally depraved, conceived in sin, and born of iniquity. They would handicap man, and make him inept at the very start. Shepherds of the handicapped, they are. They point to a detour from the secular trend thus luring the masses into a morass of antediluvian theocracy. They deliberately induce a feeling of impotence that paralyzes man's effort to understand, face, and alter reality more in harmony with his heart's desire. Thus they foster defeatism and ultimate despair, which is precisely what they want, since they have salvation for sale!

In the wake of the world wars with the accompanying intellectual blackout, a deal of dark fog has accumulated. The retreat from reason and science comes out in the way the theologians have given their spiritual accolade to Sören Kirkegaard and Reinhold Niebuhr, among others.

Denmark has no general use for Kirkegaardian, devout aberrations—that being a cultural lag. The rational Danes find the spiritual intangibles of the confused existentialist rather esoteric, unintelligible and archaic. Being in need of dollar credit, they exported Kirkegaard to America. He suddenly became a "good business proposition" as well as **une enfant terrible** and a novelty for decadent pulpiteers. Kirkegaard went into the wilderness. Of course, his irrationalism and guilt complexes hold no social guidance for the ordinary workpeople. Somber thinking cannot lead to anything but spiritual Schwärmerei and futility of effort. The Reverend Reinhold Niebuhr who sits comfortably ensconced in the ivory tower of Union Theological Seminary offers the workpeople of the world "the Cross," as the way of salvation! He regards the Nazarene's gospel and martyrdom as containing the sure-fire solution for the complex and multifarious problems of modern life. Pathetic apologetics, indeed! The symbol of the Cross has been of negligible value in rallying the world's masses to struggle for peace, plenty, freedom, beauty and brotherhood. Humankind wants to live! They want some installments of justice. Granted that "perfect justice" as Niebuhr contends, is illusory. Nevertheless history does show

FREETHOUGHT PUBLICATIONS IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

NIA LIBERA OPINIO (Our Free Opinion), in Esperanto, published by Esperanto-Amikaro de Liberpensuloj, Lotenkamp, 4, Dortmund-Kirchderne, Germany.

THE DARSHNIK, quarterly, in the Hindi language, subscription rupees eight, Editor, Yash Dev Shalya, Akhil Bharatiya Darshan Parishad, Faridkote, Pepsu, India.

THE VIVEK, monthly in Hindi language, Re. 1-8-0, Editor Ram Chandra Bora, Zalab Mohala, Jodhpur.

REKENSCHAP, quarterly in Dutch, f7,50 a year, Bleyenburgstraat 1, Utrecht, Netherlands.

DIOGENES, quarterly in Flemish, 100 fr a year, Arthur Goemaerelei, 43, Antwerpen, Belgium.

VOICE OF FREEDOM (Das Freie Wort, published monthly by the Freie Gemeinde, part in German and part in English, 50 cents a year, 3432 North Ninth St., Milwaukee 6, Wisconsin.

VEK ROZUMU, (The Age of Reason), published semi-monthly in the Czech language for 46 years by the Czechoslovak Rationalist Federation of America, 4236 West Cermak Road, Chicago 23, Illinois.

LA RAISOM, 78, Rue Jean Pierre-Timbaud, Paris 11, France.

LA PENSEE, 228, Rue du Parc, Loucain, Belgium.

BEFREIUNG, published monthly by Geschaftsstelle der Freigeistigen Vereinigung der Schwelz; fr. 9.20 yearly; postoffice 340, Zurich 39, Switzerland.

DER FREIDENKER, Lichtendorfer Strasse 51, Schwerte-Ruhr, Germany.

LA RAISON, L'Administration: M. Roumilhac, 78, rue Jean-Pierre-Timbaud, Paris XI (Frankreich).

HOBBIES

We have interesting letters from our readers about all kinds of fascinating hobbies from stamp collecting, sea shells, Esperanto, radio ham activities to rare books. One of our readers, Bob McConkey of Sioux Falls, S.D., a Juke-Box operator, has more than a casual interest in Light Waves (see his classified ad) and is also an amateur astronomer.

We invite our readers to tell us about their special interest and projects. We may be able to bring kindred spirits together. The story by our friend, J. Mark of Phoenix, Arizona—an avid stamp collector — tells about a unique aspect of this universal hobby.

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The age in which we are now living has been accused of destroying the religions in which human life had found its logic, its rules of conduct, its safe and sound stability. But the indictment cannot stand. In doing what it has done, our age has done something it could not help doing. In the process of dismantling religion as mythology, it was inevitable that many valuable pieces of the old structures would fall to the ground — precious thoughts and priceless virtues which had become attached to mythological dogmas. But these our time has made haste to gather up again; and it has worked them back, cleaned, repolished, restored, into a stronger, firmer, vaster, more noble edifice. It will be the glory of our generation if we shall succeed in founding a human religion, a pure faith, a pure religious spirit, born of thought, but of a thought embodying life and fertile of new life....

For without religion, that is to say, without poetry, without heroism, without a consciousness of universality, without harmony, without the aristocratic spirit, no society can endure.

And human society is determined to endure. If for no other reason, for this reason: that it cannot perish!!

—The Religion of Humanity

that human beings are capable of making approximations to it. The mere declaration that world war is ethically unjustifiable and socially suicidal is something. That P. W. Bridgeman can justifiably say: "Man has the capacity to respond emotionally to the practice of intellectual honesty," is a gain. Surely the whole splendid organization of science and research bears him out.

Niebuhr ignores the potentialities of human nature when he conjures up the blighting metaphysical assumption of an inexhaustible "recalcitrance" in the nature of human nature. The Deweyan view is precisely the opposite, namely, malleability, possibility, and plasticity.

Nebuhr was once a socialist. Now it appears that his socialism never took such deep root as to become an organizing and enlightening principle in his personality and public activity. He has grown cynical, coming perilously near to the brink of misanthropy. It is disquieting to see him renege, a virile mind fallen among the decadent neo-orthodox, stewing among his metaphysical dilemmas in a self-centered if volubly articulate trance. To the bored rich, preach your hell, the poor already know it too well . . .

Humanity does not need exhortation to become saints, either sacred or secular; it needs only enlightenment to find the way to itself. May the American Rationalist point the way!

Dr. Hansome is the author of the current novel APPOINTMENT WITH FORTUNE (Vantage Press Inc., 120 West 31st Street, N. Y. C., $3.50.)

What this old world sadly needs
To release it from its chains,
Is the smashing of its creeds
And the using of its brains.

Jayemsee.

We greet and salute the newest addition to Freethought journalism: "THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST".

May it become an effective and powerful instrument in the furtherance of Freedom of Mind and Ethical Culture.

JEFFERSON FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY
and
FREIE GEMEINDE OF MILWAUKEE

WHERE ARE OUR RESERVES?

by MARIE HARLOWE

The general waging the battle, is vitally concerned with the number of reserves he can commit to assure victory. The farmer is not only concerned with the present crop of his fields, but plans ahead for crop rotation and fertilization to the end that subsequent plantings will be sucucessful. Industry looks ahead and secures and trains young mechanics and engineers. so that the inevitable retirement of its skilled workers will not disrupt production.

On the other hand, the freethinker group, more than any other, makes no provision for its own future. As its ranks are depleted of its older and more dedicated members, practically nothing is done for the training of its youth for future leadership. A dwindling handful fights the power of the Catholic church: a few hold lectures on the subjects, "There is no God"; others fight each other as members of rival organizations. Some do a little, a very little, about the defense of our public school system from the inroads of sectarianism.

But not one effort is put forth to train the young freethinker. Not one book is available to help the groping parent; not one consistent teaching effort is available. Freethinker parents probably manage, like other parents, to impart the knowledge of the "birds and the bees" to their children, — knowledge which they would receive in any event from some source But few of these parents even properly train their children in ways that will make them psychologically sound as they must be in contact with other children, at ages when the herd instinct is prominent, when the child cannot easily face the ostracism of being "different". One instance comes to mind—a little girl of six in Chicago, whose parents are intelligent professional people and soundly grounded in liberalism, dresses herself each Sunday morning and goes alone to a nearby Baptist church. Her basic needs of "belonging", among others, is entirely overlooked by her parents.

We are living in a transitional time in more ways than one. This means that those who are in advance of their times, who by their sincerity are pushing ahead out of the darkness of religious shams, often have to create their own value and expressions for the coming generation. This seems particularly true in using correct methods in educating children of freethinker families.

The immediate experiences of daily life offer a wonderful avenue for teaching children. One does not need a god, a prayer, a sacred book to express communal vision. One need not be negative in leading children to believe

AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION CONVENTION

The first annual convention of the American Rationalist Federation will be held on October 27th and 28th at the Freie Gemeinde Building, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis, Mo.

The convention will convene at 1:00 p.m. After registration of delegates and greetings to friends, the regular order of business will proceed. At the conclusion of the business session, a few minutes will be devoted to a gathering at the statue of the great German poet and freethinker, Frederick Schiller (located only one block from the Freie Gemeinde Building, honoring his birthday which is on November 10th.

On Saturday evening there will be a social gathering and dinner for all delegates and friends at one of the local hotels. On Sunday at the conclusion of the convention, which will be about noon, the ladies of the Rationalist Society of St. Louis will prepare a lunch for all those attending the convention, so that the delegates and friends from other cities will be able to have a good lunch before they leave for home.

All those interested in attending the convention should contact the National Secretary Walter Hoops, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis Mo. for further details and reservations.

WANTED
NATIONAL ORGANIZER
Must be good speaker and know the movement
AMERICAN RATIONALIST FEDERATION
2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

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the pic on the cover

The picture on the cover shows the home of the Freie Gemeinde of Milwaukee. The Jefferson Freethought Society also meets here. This impressive building was erected in 1928 in the North Side section of the city, and was financed by the sale of its old downtown building and by a bond issue which is now liquidated. It is the favorite meeting place of a number of organizations and the scene of many social gatherings and festive occasions. The home has a large hall with stage, capable of seating about 800 people, a large dining room, several smaller halls, and twelve modern bowling alleys. A full time manager is in charge of this active and unique institution.

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SOW BUT NOT REAP

From the Guthrie (Ia.) Center Times.

There are some people who sow wild oats all week and go to church Sunday to pray for a crop failure.

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in something else (than is offered their Christian schoolmates). It is indeed a great advantage in liberal thought that we do not have to justify "the ways of god" in life's inconsistencies and injustices. The liberal accepts the world as it is, and makes the best of it. There is a great practical task in understanding what it really is. Children can learn ethics through a vision of life including plants, animals, humans in social life; they can be taught that all creatures are of one substance as science teaches this, not as the religionist claims because of the god-creation. Children can thus be taught that all creatures are brothers. Universal Brotherhood is an ideal of humanity, and need not be based upon the "fatherhood of god" concept. Thus the child may be able to feel the psychological necessity of "belonging".

The rights of others can be taught through hospitality, courtesy, kindness. With the abolition of rewards and punishments, self-discipline and independence can be taught. The virtue of patience can be developed with growing plants and animal pets. A sense of responsibility in the collective sense of ownership and care of family property is no great problem to inculcate. Since a child's love of knowledge is instinctive, all questions should be answered in the cultivation of mental interests. Aim at the development of keen perceptions, which in turn will provoke observation and association. Lead children to distinguish between right and wrong—that which helps or hurts, not in the sense of "sin", and they will spontaneously choose the right action. As they are helped to self-control and self-criticism, as also sustained effort, there will be voluntary obedience.

Basically there are two fundamental concepts necessary to the foundation of liberal thinking for children: 1. the affirmation of dignity and worth of every creature. 2. freedom of thought and action.

The matter of Sunday observance is a common problem in the freethinker home. Having no god, they have no "holy days'. Of course, Sunday is really a good old pagan SUN-day, but it now has only Christian connotation. Buddhists observe the "Moon Days"—the New and Full Moon days with feasting and special studies, with the idea of getting the feeling of oneness with the natural phenomena, the cyclic on-going of Nature, of which we are all a part.

The freethinker parent who leaps into the fray to fight the Church seems very much like Don Quixote fighting the windmill. Let him attend to the development of young freethinkers,—the "replacements" in the field, and he will contribute more to the future enlightenment of the world.

Atheism Outmoded

by HARRY E. MONGOLD

Some of the hottest arguments are about minor points. We are caught off guard especially on arguments about definitions. To someone who questions our usage of a word we feel like saying, "Listen, I've been using that word for quite a few years now. Do you think I don't even know what it means?" However, the definition of a word is no minor matter

One recent evening I was involved in a heated argument with two fellow Unitarians over several definitions. According to them, the majority of people these days use the word "God" to mean an impersonal element in the universe, such as the laws of nature. On this premise they reason that the word "atheist" is out of date, since no one disbelieves in the properties of matter or the factor of order in the universe. Upon this basis I was able to point out that the word "agnostic" is also **passe** if it means one who claims not to know whether gods exist. The discussion was an eye-opener as to the way educated people consider the atheist movement. Apparently most well educated people do mean something by the word "God" as previously suggested. If so, they must consider that atheists just are wasting their time.

My two friends say there are no atheists but only a few people who use the name and argue about dead issues. They prefer to be called Humanists, saying that this word means one who is devoted to advancing the interests of mankind through science and reason regardless of any supposed authority that is not based on science. They feel that an atheist is one who seeks to uproot superstition without giving confused people any valid understanding of themselves and the universe to take the place of the church's mythological preachments.

It may be that in our time the word "atheist" is a remnant of the past. It has been applied in former times simply to anyone who could not accept the prevailing theology in his part of the world. It came to mean definitely "one who does not believe in a personal god," as far as the freethinker movement was concerned, yet some dictionaries have said flatly, "One who denies the existence of God." Words can become archaic; perhaps it is time to discard "atheist" in favor of words that are still meaningful.

It is frustrating for one to lose his name. Some of us are more interested in debunking superstition than we are in teaching science or debating questions.

In these days, perhaps, only the hard core of theology is left — that which people need because of their ignorance and their sense of insecurity. A debunker of myths will not be listened to except by those who are **able** to give them up, and these are they who (through a stable adjustment to life) have already done so.

Formerly there were evidently many people who found it interesting to listen to atheists. It is reasonable to suppose that they were largely those whose interest in theology was purely intellectual. They could afford to change their minds, and they were tired of endless Bible studies in search of inconsequential details. In fact, they were excited about the new advances of science, especially the intellectual promise of Darwinism and cultural anthropology. Nowadays we have people who are either already educated beyond the myth stage or who are so ignorant and insecure that they need to believe in someone who will make a future life better than this one is for them. The latter class may not be in much different proportion to the population than it always was. Church membership statistics suggest that it is larger, if anything. If we are to reach these people we must offer a "replacement" for their crutch of theology.

A Unitarian minister, Dr. Sonder Josh

terms organized Christianity a "security program." What the atheists have failed to realize is just this. Instead, they have tended to regard it as a tyranny that preaches a logical monstrosity. Athough the latter view is undoubtedly true, it is not the **socially significant fact.** People cling to Christiantiy because they think it is their support, as well as because they were practically hypnotized with it in their childhood. Clearly, then, we must organize what knowledge we have that gives us our adjustment to life, and then we must offer this knowledge to the Christians.

Let us assume, then, that the strength of the freethinkers movement in the past was due to the desire that many intellectuals had for enlightenment, and not due to any general human appeal inherent in the arguments used. The movement did a great deal of good, probably, although the advances of science that freed people from drudgery and disease, giving new opportunity in this life for happiness, may have done more good. Since actions speak louder than words, apparently industry and labor unions did much of our work for us. There was an increase in production of all sorts and in the assurance with which the common people demanded the fruits of progress. This meant that people took less interest in the Bible and lost much of their former beliefs. Very few now can claim to think that the "chief end of man is to glorify God." (Yet they still use the concept of a god as the originator of morality and think they can appease his wrath by certain rituals and ceremonials.)

To follow this trend of thought too far is to reject all discussion groups and all adult educational programs. We might say, "Let science and social reform keep us interested in this life. They will see to it that theology is not too effective." Of course this is not true. Progress is still greatly hampered by superstition, which is supported more or less actively by most churches. We must always promote rational philosophy, for attitudes behind human action are the guides to progress.

At one time the freethought movement must have had a hand in clearing the cobwebs from the minds of the leaders of our society. Then these social leaders and their descendents left us behind. When we attack Bible and church we find ourselves talking to people who have not the education to understand us nor the position in life to be able to endure the thought of the machinelike universe we discern. Therefore, we must change our educational plans.

It seems that instead of the luxury of arguing about theological concepts, we need to teach other things. We can help teach the average man and woman that morality is to mankind's own benefit, and that once the meaning and usefulness of morality is understood, people inevitably adopt it. Our attitude toward the god idea will be that it is out of date, not that we are fighting it. Let "facts," not the word "science" nor our organizations, be known as the cause of theology's weakening status. When we teach these facts it is to help people understand themselves and their world — not to fight religions. Part of these facts are that men make and change their morals as needed and that knowledge can bring one both hope and love, which people seem so badly to need. (This is why the psychology of the child's early life is important to know.)

Thus while reasuring people that morals do not collapse when gods fall, but are strengthened and made more meaningful than ever, we can teach evolution, the vastness of space, the molecular constitution of organisms, the value of scientific research, and the power of self-knowledge to bring happiness and health.

What does this mean for our own publications, addressed to ourselves? It is true that we need to keep in mind the several types of harm that theological superstition does and we need to know how the organization behind them use their political power. Also we must throw our weight, such as it may be, behind defense of our liberties, and for this purpose must keep informed. All our open campaigns, however, would be accepted in better grace if we

avoided having so obviously an ax to grind. The Unitarians, the American Civil Liberties Union and some other groups can stand up for the liberties of all sides equally, while we are inclined to take a fanatic stand apart.

In our publications it will be wise to develop an attitude that is tolerant of the misfortune of being ignorant, fearful of life, and misinformed. We must **like** people, even those who appear to be racketeers. Each human being takes from life what he needs as best he can find what he needs. That we are fortunate enough to be both educated and honest (which is a form of wisdom) cannot justify our bitterness toward those who are unlike us. We customarily accuse priests and ministers of being hypocrites, for example, but we should learn to realize that with their well-trained limited view of themselves and their role in life, they live in a different intellectual world. Again, perhaps the majority of ministers are honest and ignorant.

Besides keeping the bitterness out of our discussions and adopting an unaccustomed tone of respect (for the people, not their concepts), we can make a few concessions about words, such as using the word "religion" to mean "philosophy of life." But more important, we should learn to emphasize scientific concepts, like evolution, and social principles, like fairness and respect for all types of thinkers on any issue. In our magazines let us have regular articles on the sciences. There is a continuous stream of new information coming, and the nature of basic scientific philosophy is always under debate. Perhaps the most important science for us to study is psychology, for there we learn why people are as they are, how they can be changed, and how children can be prevented from feeling insecure in their adult lives.

Along with our tactics, those of us who have called ourselves atheists or freethinkers must change our label, for maximum effectiveness. It should cause no great distress for one to give up calling himself an "atheist" and substitute a new word. In our country's political past the Federalists and the Whigs were venerable parties whose members finally had to give up their slogans and symbols. This did not mean that their attitudes or desires all died out; to a great extent it meant merely a change in the language. A party can keep its name and change its concepts completely, but if the name itself becomes out of fashion, the old concepts must seek a new name. This seems silly but is a true aspect of human progress.

Because of the old tactics associated with it, the name "atheist" means to most people "one who seeks to destroy the basis for our society," and to many fellow liberals, "one who seeks to end theology by arguing philosophy." "Agnostic" is not a useful label, either, as it implies indifference, whereas we have a message, if only we can learn how to deliver it.

Since we are dealing with words, let us use a name that emphasizes what we are taking away. The automobile salesman, of course, does not say, 'I think you should get rid of that old clunker of yours; it is a menace to the highways," etc. He offers a new car and explains how beautiful it is, how easily it steers and brakes, etc. If atheists expect ot be listened to, they must associate themselves with such movements as rationalism and humanism. The formation of the American Rationalist Federation last November has brought together several groups under a desirable title.

"Rationalism" is not just a new word for atheism. It is much more general. It stands for an increased and improved use of the individual intellect and a skepticism of authority which does not reveal its sources of information — on any question. It is not narrowly limited in the type of problem that is discussed freely, frankly, intelligently, skeptically, and thoroughly. Rationalism carries the torch of the greatest of human minds. It seeks to bring all issues to complete enlightenment. Ignorance, prejudice, ambiguity of language, and confusion of reasoning wherever found are proper subjects for it. The beliefs that the churches support are only part of our concern, and ideas like "sin" must not be strengthened

by our giving too much attention to them. The political influence of the churches is of immediate concern to all of us, but in attacking misuse of it we need not attack theology itself. We should "attack" theology only by teaching the opposite of its concepts.

If we are to reach a larger audience we must sympathize with the needs of the average person and explain them and satisfy them, rather than frighten people away by seeming not to know of them. Our fundamental principle can be, not to destroy (directly) superstition, but to teach so that superstition will fall by the wayside. The supersitious will take much more kindly to this.

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THE WIDE, WIDE MOVEMENT

All organizations are urged to send in their news, programs, activities, elections, socials, past or future, and pictures of meetings, officers or members, or anything of interest to Rationalists.

The RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION OF JOHANNESBURG (South Africa) had a well-attended meeting when the Margaret Knight radio broadcast talks were read at a recent meeting with an attentive audience in a lively discussion afterwards. Miss Sheila Shlain read the Knight lectures. Another meeting, also held in the Public Library, dealt with the topic of religious education in schools. Mr. W. Sutherland and Mr. R. Eybers of the Association debated with two members of the Arnold Smith Public Speaking Union on the subject: "That the teaching of religion in government schools should be abolished."

The NEW ZEALAND RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION has found that the program of a lecture and a discussion following is out of vogue and has no appeal. The Association will continue their lectures but add more panel discussions and social programs. Two recent discussions were on the subject "Should Women Sit on Juries?" and "Equal Pay for Equal Work?" The discussion drew an audience of about 90. Films are being added to their music programs. A special committee handles the social program. The Association office was upset recently when it was repainted in pale grey and blue. In due course they believe they will have their own building.

Just as did the Rationalists in Johannesburg, the New Zealand organization also had a debate with spiritualists when three members of the Psychical Research Society debated three Rationalists followed by a discussion from the audience. Two other programs received excellent response. Mr. Oscar McBrine gave a talk on "East and West—an international view" followed by a film showing the work of the United Na-National Children's Emergency Fund in Mexico and Siam. A round table discussion proved popular when the discussion covered the desirability of increasing membership, the maintaining of monthly meetings, interest created in the R.P.A., and the solid agreement that organized Rationalism must and will continue in Whangarei. An annual dinner reunion was also held. The Association has a Rationalist Juvenile Roll. Each child receives an enrollment certificate suitable for framing, and receives birthday and other cards on occasion.

The NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY of England is reopening old lecture sites and continuing the present ones such as Hyde Park and Hampstead. Central London and West Ham Branches are giving special attention to lectures and the Kingston Branch continuing its outdoor lectures. The local press had forecast the early demise of the Dagenham Branch of the Society but they recently celebrated their first year of activity with a dinner, social and dance. The Branch was invited to take part in the Dagenham Town Forum in discussion on "Religion and Reason in the Modern Age." The suggestion of a return match met with approval. The secretary of the N.S.S., Colin McCall, was invited to speak on a TV program (see last issue of the AR) called "Britain in Decline?" His talk was filmed but was consigned to the archives. Mr. McCall's letter of protest was published in The Observer, New Statesman, and Daily Mail.

The Annual Conference of the NATIONAL SECULAR SOCIETY was held during warm and sunny weather with the best attendance since the war. During the past year or so many new and younger speakers have emerged. The Liverpool Pierhead speaking site had fourteen Secularist speakers who were heard by a large crowd, with a good sale of The Freethinker.

New books published by the RATIONALIST PRESS ASSOCIATION of England are "Crime and Social Action," by George Godwin, "Reflections on Woman," by Richard Curle, "Government and Politics in Tribal Societies," by Professor Isaac Schapera, "Reason in Action," by Five humanists, and several others. Information and a complete list of Rationalist books may be obtained by writing to the RATIONALIST PRESS ASSOCIATION, 40 Drury Lane, London, WC2, England.

A new journal of freethought character has appeared in Urguguay called ATENEL.

The FRENCH NATIONAL FEDERATION invited Freethinkers to join them in the Voltaire celebration at Geneva. Mr. C. Bradlaugh Bonner, President of the World Union of Freethinkers was one of the speakers.

The subjects proposed for discussion at the Fifth Annual Convention at the INDIAN RATIONALIST ASSOCIATION are: Survey of the History of Rationalism, the Secular foundation of Rationalism, the Rationalist basis of morality, the relation between Rationalism and Humanism, and the five-year plan for Social Reform.

Due to the loss of income from investments the Ethical Union of England has changed its magagine THE PLAIN VIEW from a quarterly to two issues a year. The magazine is noted for its long and conclusive articles. The Union hopes to be able to return to a quarterly publication soon.

The JEFFERSON FREETHOUGHT SOCIETY of Milwaukee had its traditional Summer Party in the club room of Jefferson Hall. Another tradition is its officers. Elmer Johnson was elected to his eighth term as president and Henry L. Watt was elected to his fifteenth term as secretary. Are there any other officers of organizations in the movement with longer terms? Mr. Johnson recently spent a month in the hospital for a bone grafting operation to his leg as a result of his accident with a hit-and-run driver. Last year this organization was responsible for defeating an attempt to place the word "God" in the statement of policy of the public library under consideration by the library board. Several members protested on "released time" in committee hearings when it was under consideration of the legislature of Wisconsin. Some of the programs held recently were Secular Miracles, by Elmer Johnson, **Freedom to Read,** by Richard E. Krug, Milwaukee City Librarian, **The Structure of the Universe,** by Herbert W. Cornell, former president of the Milwaukee Astronomical Society, **Cornerstones of Religious Freedom in America,** by Henry L. Watt, and **How Conservative are Americans?** by Edwin T. Buehrer, minister of the Third Unitarian Church of Chicago.

The FREETHINKERS OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA heard Frank Vincent Waddy, life member of the Rationalist Press Association and president of Hollywood Chapter of the American Humanist Association speak on the subject **Fifty Years of Rationalism.** The program also included a documentary film on India and a discussion period. The meeting was held at the Ruskin Art Club.

The Freethought Tract Society (P.O. Box 7271, Phoenix, Arizona) has printed a quarter of a million small Freethought tracts for distribution on a large scale. Write them for information.

James Hervey Johnson, author of **Superior Men** has written a fine article on the Jehovah's Witnesses for the British journal THE FREETHINKER.

The FRIENDSHIP LIBERAL LEAGUE received another $2000 towards the down payment of their building to house the Thomas Paine Center, making the total over $10,000. Transfer of title to the FLL is in process.

The FREETHINKERS OF AMERICA will hold an important meeting on Sunday October 7, 1956 at Steinway Hall, 113 West 557th Street, New York City at three p.m.

Another conference of RATIONALISTS PUBLICATIONS was held in St. Louis when four guarantors of THE AMERICAN RATIONALIST magazine in Chicago met with nine St. Louisans for an all day business meeting. An interesting sidelight of the day was the incident of being refused service in a nearby restaurant because one of the party was colored. Rather than hunt for a good place to eat and lose time the group went to the nearest colored luncheonette on Cass Avenue, which was next door to two "store front churches," the Pentacostal Power Church was one. The group took every chair in the place.

Chicago Freethinkers experienced a real rationalist wedding last June 30th when Joseph Lacina and Beverly Visus, both members of the PIONEERS OF INDEPENDENT THOUGHT were married by V. Miniberger, speaker for the Czechoslovak Rationalist Federation. The ceremony and the reception was witnessed by more than 400 guests. A Rationalist wedding indeed . . . On July 4th the CRFA sponsored an Independence Day Picnic. It was a chilly day, but hundreds of Chicagoland Rationalists attended this gala event and the CRFA chalked up an another succesful affair. . . . And on July 28th, at the foot of the Karel Havlicek statue in Douglas Park the Czech Rationalists met again in respect to the memory of a great Czech patriot, who never failed to attack or ridicule in press or prose, the Roman hierarchy. A hundred years have passed since this great man had died . . . During the month of September all the chapters of the CRFA will again meet every month, conducting many lectures, sponsoring individual social and dramatical affairs and work like bees to sustain the publishing of their organ, the "Age of Reason" which is being published for the past forty-six years.

At Random . . .

Commencement speakers have been at it again this year. The crop of pious platitudes has been more plentiful than ever, and religion was a favorite subject. Said Prof in Ann Arbor: "Government and Religion cannot be independent of each other." We prefer the Thomas Jefferson position to the effect that just government does not need the protection of religion and religion does not need the government for protection.

A rabbi has been quoted in another commencement address as saying that many persons who have turned to religion have done so to escape from the reality of modern life. That's quite an interesting admission coming from the clergy.

Reporting a prize fight: His teeth are like the ten commandments — all broken.

The German Kaiser Wilhelm II was no friend of the Roman Catholic Church. As King of Prussia he was the titular head of the Lutheran Church in that country. When the Italian hierarchy attempted to close Protestant schools and churches, he gave them through official channels this point-blank message: For each school and church you close, I shall close two in Prussia. The clerics understood that kind of language and the interference stopped at once.

Soon after the singing of "Bless these walls, so firm and stout" in a Fargo, N. Dak. church, the plaster began to fall from the walls and part of the basement ceiling crashed to the floor. A national magazine reported this incident under the heading: Power of Positive Suggestion.

The Church considered it holy to burn living beings at the stake but thinks it is atrocious to cremate a corpse.

Learn as though you were to live forever; live as though you were to die tomorrow.

Thomas Hardy had this to say Christmas Day 1924:

"Peace on Earth," was said. We sing it.
And pay a million priests to bring it.
After two thousand years of mass
We've got as far as poison gas."

News of Herbert C. Holdridge and his supporters are provided in the Holdridge News Notes, P.O. Box 1086, Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Congratulations to Joseph Lewis of the Freethinkers of America and editor of "Age of Reason" for his courageous fight in Florida against the "Fake" healer Coe of Dallas. Interesting facts about this pernicious racket were divulged at the hearing: the tremendous profits; the keen business sense of its promoters. If the freethought movement were alive. it should have provided Lewis with help from local and state organizations. The veteran fighter deserves the thanks of all freethinkers.

James Thurber coined this nifty definition of a philosopher as "one who seeks a magnificent explanation for his insignificance."

And talking about definitions: **Opportunist**— A person who, finding himself in hot water, decides he needs a bath anyway; **Horse Sense**— stable thinking; **Net** — a bunch of holes tied together with a string.

In a recent book on Existentialism, theologian Tillich of Harvard Univeristy criticized as dangerously irreligious the sweet and pretty religious pictures that are all too common in church papers, meeting rooms and church offices.

I deplore the action of the Boston Unitarian Church (Old North) in turning down the request of its pastor to hire a Negro assistant minister. 30% of the congregation was against the proposal, threatened to withdraw membership and pledges. Most of the protests came from successful businessmen from 40-50 years old. They had been willing to support the Negro cause in far-away Montgomery but in their own church they drew the line. The courageous pastor intends to leave next year unless the congregation meanwhile backs his stand.

The pleasures of the great are the tears of the poor. —WALTER HOOPS

FROM OUR MAIL BOX

I am much interested in your editorial (first issue). You say the title of the magazine is all embracing. How right you are. There are others but they are offending by attacks on a literature that is unique. Few of them are scientific enough to interpret the Mosiac intention, which, in its time, was quite modernistic and largely interpretive of the Code Hammurabi, graven on stone several centuries before Moses, a highly trained individual with an imagination no one has ever equaled or remotely conceived, came upon the scene.

Dr. Adolphe de Castro
(Former U. S. Consul, Madrid)
in his 98th year

L. L. ZAMENHOF

ESPERANTO— International Language

by GEORGE FALGIER

(Editor's Note. The resolution adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at Montevideo in December 1954, noting the accomplishmests of Eperanto and setting up arrangements for collaboration with the Universal Esperanto Association has stimulated new interest in the problem of an international language. The American Humanist Association adopted a resolution at its Annual Meeting in Chicago last March endorsing the action of UNESCO. We here present an article written by a member of the St. Louis Rationalist Society who has been an Esperantist for many years. We also present in this issue a specimen of the language in the form of a translation of one of the articles to be found elsewhere in the magazine.

Ludwig L. Zamenhof, the author of Esperanto, grew up in a town on the Polish-Russian border where four ethnic groups were represented in the population, each with its own language, each jealous and hostile toward the others. The gentle humanitarian spirit of the boy was disturbed by this state of affairs, and even as a youth his thoughts were already concentrated on the formulating of an inter-language.

The language barrier renders the basic good will of human beings ineffectual on the international plane, and thwarts the normal human desire to understand and co-operate with others. It can be effectively breached only by an auxiliary language acceptable to all, readily learned and yet capable of conveying all the nuances of thought and emotion in writing and speech.

Esperantists assert that since its introduction in 1887 and the first international congress of Esperantists at Boulogne-sur-Mer in 1905, Esperanto has repeatedly proved itself the answer to the need for an international language. The grass-roots growth it has made during this period is cited as evidence that it is indeed a living language.

The situation has been confused from time to time by the introduction of new projects for an international language. Of the dozen or more which have appeared to challenge Esperanto, only one, Ido, was able to make some headway for a time. Its name is actually an Esperanto word meaning "offspring." Ido was alleged to be the offspring of Esperanto and was to be a great improvement over its parent. Its propagators included a wealthy backer, the Marquis de Beaufront, and a world-famous professor of linguistics, Otto Jespersen. Some may have been led to make a choice through a

WIDOW, PRIEST DIE IN MOTEL

—Chicago Daily News, 2/7/56

HERNANDO, Miss. — (AP)— An Illinois widow and a 45-year-old Catholic priest died Monday after registering at a motel as "the Connollys."

Coroner J. F. Gore ruled their deaths accidental. He said gas escaping from a heater in their motel room asphyxiated the couple.

A motel attendant found the bodies.

The priest was identified by the Roman Catholic diocesan chancery office in Springfield, Ill., as the Rev. Thomas Connolly of Macon, Ill.

He was pastor of St. Stanislaus Church at Macon and the mission of St. Francis De Sales at Moweaqua, Ill. He was a native of Murrayville, Ill.

Sheriff W. A. White of DeSoto County said the woman was Mrs. Edward Minor of Springfield, Ill.

In Springfield, the Sangamon County sheriff's office said Mrs. Minor, about 45, was a resident until recently of Stonington, Ill.

The office said she had been a widow about a year and was survived by a 22-year-old daughter, who is in a convent preparing to become a nun.

Blame not the priest. Blame the institution which perverts Nature by demanding of its priest-slaves that they be something less than men although they are not eunuchs.—Ed. note.

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A NEW PAMPHLET FOR SALE—"POPE JOAN" a riddle of the dark ages.—Written by Sam Dicks. 16 pages. Single copy 15c, 4 for 50c. Order from the AMERICAN RATIONALIST, 2218 St. Louis Ave., St. Louis 6, Mo.

STULTIFYING IS THE WORD FOR IT

Stultifying is the word for it. I have just heard a radio sermon presumably by a Protestant clergyman. His theme song was that, in time of crisis, or anytime for that matter, one cannot be strong, self-possessed, and act intelligently unless he believes in God; but if he "believe in God" then by that fact alone, he will be, in time of crisis, strong ,self- possessed, intelligent and courageous, in fact, indomitable.

The hearer was told in this sermon that training, native ability, experience and intelligence are of no avail in time of stress unless one believes in supernatural help and gets it. The price of this help is not good actions, training, experience or any of the things that ought to be of assistance.

No, the price tag of supernatural help which the preacher said was indispensible is belief in a supernatural Being, which belief is grounded upon nothing more tangible, apparently, than the preacher's assertion that it will be efficacious.

Alfred North Whitehead is quoted as saying that Christianity is probably Western civilization's greatest misfortune. This preacher goes far toward proving it.

Weeno Bynow

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—THE BOOK—

THE WORD OF GOD

(JUST OFF PRESS)

Written Editorially

GOD JEHOVAH WAS CREATED BY MAN IN THE IMAGE OF MAN

25c per copy, Post Paid, 5 copies One Dollar

M. L. ARTHUR, P.O. Box 1144, Joplin, Mo.

consideration of the two personalities rather than of the languages themselves—on the one hand, the humble Jewish oculist; on the other, the renowned Danish professor. It was again in a new guise the old conflict of technical expert and the creative genius. In spite of technically competent authorship or influential backing, the many projects have lacked the vitality with which Zamenhof was able to infuse Esperanto, and none has proved a serious contender for the role of international language.

Esperantists think that any individual or group sincerely interested in the establishment of an international language, after intelligently considering the history of the problem during the last half-century, would feel obliged to back Esperanto and build on the solid accomplishment already made rather than lightly starting from scratch.

As you look over the translation, you will recognize many word-roots. About two-thirds of the word-roots in Esperanto are derived from Romance sources, mainly French and Latin. A third are derived from Teutonic sources, mainly German and English. Orientals find a familiar feature in the structural system of the language, which is agglutinative. This means that word-root is an unchanging unit, a block which can be combined freely with others to form new words. One of the oldest active Esperanto movements is found in Japan.

Phonetic orthography, a fixed accent (always on the next-to-the-last syllable, as in the Polish language), word-building from the simple roots and affixes, and a simple grammar (sixteen rules without exceptions) are features which make Esperanto easy to learn. Any word which is already internationally used automatically becomes a part of Esperanto: telephone, **telefono**; electronic, **elektrona**; automatically, **automate.** Esperanto grows in the same way that national languages do.

To paraphrase a part of the resolution adopted by the Humanists at their last Annual Meeting, the World Rationalist movement needs a common language. Esperanto is ready and able to serve. Learning it, you will be able to correspond with freethinkers in diverse parts of the non-English-speaking world. If you are interested, the writer will be glad to forward free information on request. If you want to begin right away, a dollar and a half will bring you a good pocket dictionary and kit of materials. (All proceeds go to AR.)

The American Civil Liberties Union is the watchdog of our democratic rights. Memberships range from $2.00 up. Write ACLU, 170 Fifth Ave., New York 10, N.Y.

(Esperanto)

La Signifo kaj Valoro de Liberpensado

Mi komencos per difino. Liberpensado povas esti difinita kiel la malakcepto de aŭtoritateco en aferoj de la opinio. Ĝi metas la persvadon de faktoj kontraŭ la devigo de perforto. Liberpensulo estas tiu kiu formas la propran opinion pro la faktoj kiel li konstatas ilin. Ĉu pravaj aŭ malpravaj, liaj opinioj estas la propraj. Li estas voĉo, ne eĥo. Historie, liberpensado fariĝis identa kun la malakcepto de religiaj doktrinoj.

Konsiderinda progreso okazis en la antikvaj greka kaj roma civilizacioj rilate al la starigo de libero de pensado. Nek unu nek la alia havis ion ajn en la formo de sankta libro, kiu avertas la homojn ne manĝi de la arbo de scio.

La intelekta libero de Eŭropo mortis kun la starigo de la Kristana Eklezio. Biblio en la mano, la eklezio renkontis ĉiun novan ideon kun "Tiel diras la Sinjoro". Maltoleremo fariĝis virto kaj persekuto, kutimo. La pensanto ĉie suspektiĝis. La kredema stultulo estis aprobita kiel modelo de religia perfekteco.

En la kristana mitologio estas rimarkite, ke la unua homa peko estas ago de malobeo. Li manĝis de la Arbo de Scio kaj la Dioj ne povas pardoni tiun ofendon; tamen, la scio estas la plej granda bezono de la homaro. Ĝuste tio levis la homon de la sovaĝeco al la civilizo.

Sed oni ne povas akiri veran scion sen la kuraĝo ekzameni, modifi kaj forĵeti tion, kio jam establiĝis. La Liberpensado, do, pretendas al la kiel eble plej plena libereco de pensado, parolado, publikigo kaj agado. Ĝi postulas ĉi tiujn, ne kiel luksaĵojn, sed kiel necesaĵojn; ĝi petas ne nur por ilia toleriĝo, sed por ilia kuraĝiĝo. Ili devas esti la senkondiĉaj kaj neforigeblaj rajtoj en socio, en kiu viroj kaj virinoj povas ekzisti kun digno kaj memrespekto.

(Extracts from article in **Sennaciulo**, Esperanto monthly, 67 ave. Gambetta, Paris 20, France.)

(English)

The Significance and Value of Freethought

I shall begin by means of a definition. Freethought can be defined as the nonacceptance of authority in matters of opinion. It puts the persuasion of facts against the compulsion of violence. That person is a freethinker who forms his own opinion on the basis of the facts as he realizes them. Whether right or wrong, his opinions are his own. He is a voice, not an echo. Historically, freethought became identical with the nonacceptance of religious doctrines.

Considerable progress occurred in the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations relative to the establishment of freedom of thought. Neither one nor the other had anything at all in the form of a sacred book which warned men not to eat of the tree of knowledge.

The intellectual freedom of Europe died with the establishment of the Christian Church. Bible in hand, the church met every new idea with "Thus says the Lord". Intolerance became a virtue and persecution, a custom. The thinker everywhere became suspect. The credulous dolt was approved as the model of religious perfection.

In the Christian mythology it has been noted that man's first sin is an act of disobedience. He ate of the Tree of Knowledge and the Gods cannot pardon that offence; yet knowledge is the greatest need of mankind. Precisely that raised man from savagery to civilization.

But one is not able to acquire true knowledge without the courage to examine, modify and discard that which already was established. Freethought, then, lays claim to the fullest possible liberty of thought, speech, publication and activity. It demands these, not as luxuries, but as necessities; it asks not only for their toleration, but for their encouragement. They must be the unconditional and inalienable rights in a society in which men and women can exist with dignity and self-respect.

Pronunciation

a–far; **c**–bits; **ĉ**–chip; **e**–there; **g**–go; **ĝ**–gem; **ĥ**–loch; **i**–machine; **j**–yes; **ĵ**–measure; **o**–for; **s**–so; **ŝ**–show; **u**–rule; **ŭ**–won. Rest like Eng.

What's Your Problem

This being only our third issue, we have no specific situations to deal with as yet. Therefore, to give you some idea of our approach to these problems, we wish to share with you excerpts from our remarks at a meeting of the Pioneers of Independent Thought, March 11th last.

"One of the reasons we have always argued for the formation of local fellowships such as yours is that through discussion of social, economic and other cultural problems, we may be all better informed and more competent to act wisely in our efforts to solve these problems that confront us as members of our local community and of society in general.

There is another area, however, that cannot be covered in open meeting and that has to do with our intimate personal life, with our family and our closer relationships with other individuals.

In each issue of LOOK magazine, Dr. Norman Vincent Peale has a page on which he answers this type of questions but almost always with the same old theological emphasis.

Noting this, it occurred to us that Rationalists have problems too—believe it or not! Don't we all for that matter? Therefore, while we Rationalists would have little respect for solutions offered from Dr. Peale's angle, we might welcome suggestions from a source free from fantasy and unreality. Send in your problems. Communications will be held in strict confidence, of course.

The ability to maintain good relations with one's brother man or sister woman is one of the most precious gifts with which we possibly could be endowed. However, it is by no means easy to achieve consistently. We are all too prone to forget the vast range of individual differences in people's heredity and environment. This tends to hopelessly confuse us in dealing with those who come out of backgrounds unlike our own. Comes a clash of wills and we, too frequently, wind up exchanging emotional outbursts which generate a great deal of heat but shed little light on the questions upon which we find ourselves divided. This always leaves us farther apart than ever.

One should always remember that the vast majority of people want to do the right thing. Properly approached, they will do so because practically everyone craves acceptance as "regular" people. However, when approached belligerently and in a manner which offends their self-esteem, one need not be surprised if they react belligerently also. A law of physics applies here;—"Action and reaction are equal and lie in the same plane."

These individual differences, for which we always must make allowances are the things which make it impossible for psychology and psychiatry ever to be exact sciences. The findings of either psychologist or psychiatrist can never be much more than possibilities or, at the very most, probabilities. Individual reaction is entirely too unpredictable.

The long struggle of human beings to develop social behavior patterns which will yield a maximum of harmony in the individual's relations with his fellows, has brought forth a code of morals and ethics which is presumed to be known to all and observed by all. However, many appear unaware of the code's existence and others, although they are, refuse to abide by the code's requirements.

These conditions exist because of the wide variations in mental capacity among members of the human family. Some are lacking in understanding of their responsibilities in relation to others while many, because of improper upbringing, have never come to realize that fulfillment of their social responsibilities requires self-discipline and that no man can be a law unto himself.

We had gotten this far in preparing this talk when, to our surprise, we received your postcard notice announcing, quote, "Mr. Hewson's Lecture — When a Rationalist Marries". It would seem, therefore, from this that, when the question, What's your problem? comes up, the natural assumption must be that it is with marriage that one's problems begin!

This assumption is well grounded in many instances and so we suppose we will have to deal with the factors involved in this basic relationship upon which the achievement of a well-ordered society is so completely dependent.

Consider the appalling number of maladjusted individuals and delinquents, both adult

and juvenile, who come out of broken homes where man and wife have failed to make the mutual adjustments necessary to a harmonious household.

Consider the most appalling amount of bickering in the home between parents who are unequal to their responsibility because, perhaps, they, themselves, may have come out of similar unstable backgrounds.

Consider the effect upon children of the empty home — both parents working — or the deserted widowed or divorced wife working to support her children with nobody present with the necessary discipline to guide their feet nor to provide the warm atmosphere of a proper home which would give the children a sense of belonging.

When we weigh these serious consequences, we must realize that a sound marriage must be based upon something more than physical attraction and sexual urge which, unfortunately, is the case in all too many unions.

To avoid all this you ask, How am I to choose a proper mate? Who can answer such a question adequately? There are too many considerations involved. However, the main question is how much you have in common?, which breaks down into:

1. Are you interested in the same things, broadly speaking?
2. Are your educational levels about the same?
3. Are your outlooks upon life similar?
4. Are you reasonably good tempered?

Again, of course, there is the highly important matter of your mutual health because, laying aside romantic moonshine, neither should knowingly hazard a marriage in which untimely death of either is a possibility or that your children might be foredoomed by inherited handicaps.

One very important procedure is for both boy and girl to take a look into the future. They can do this by visiting each other's homes. The girl will see, more or less, in his father the sort of man her husband will be twenty-five years hence and the boy will see in her mother pretty much the picture of his wife and his own home in later years if they marry. This will give the questioner an idea of our approach to his problem.

—Arthur B. Hewson

■

In addition to the books reviewed and listed in this issue we can supply any book published in the USA and abroad. We can also handle your magazine subscriptions.

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APPOINTMENT WITH FORTUNE

by

Marius Hansome

This book leaves the reader with a feeling of having met a person of extraordinary ability, a human being with deep insight and a thinker of outstanding ability. "Appointment with Fortune" is the life story of Marius Hansome who came to this country in his youth as a sailor on a Danish boat. After a few years of hard work along the Columbia river he went to school to become in time a teacher, professor of social science with a doctorate from Columbia University.

The story tells about people young Massie meets on his way. There is a group of Scandinavian lumber-and fishermen who befriend him and influence his early thinking. They read "The Appeal to Reason," "Freethinker," "The National Ripsaw" and "The Truthseeker." In the long evenings around the blazing stove, discussions go on and on and Massie's intellectual curiosity is aroused so that he becomes acquainted with Darwin, Huxley, Haeckel, Paine. Later the author takes part in the emancipation struggle for women, joins the Socialist Party— then in its heyday — and becomes a valuable organizer and orator for the cause. There are also short sketches of encounters with such diverse personalities as Helen Keller, Eugene Debs, Victor Berger, Big

Bill Haywood and Billy Holiday, the evangelist. One of his teachers, author of an important book on American government, offers this advice: "To be radical in the true generic sense is commendable, but remember, in the academic world you can't afford to be radical both in politics and religion. If you are radical in politics, you had better observe conservatism in church matters. That will give you a protective coloration." Not all intimidations on the American campus started in the McCarthy era.

There is also a moving love story in the book, tenderly told wihouth cloying sentimentality.

Marius Hansome has written outstanding works in the field of social science: "World Workers' Education Movements" and "Sociology," a textbook, and has contributed to numerous anthologies and periodicals.

His outlook on life is expressed in these words: "Life.... is not wholly a controlled experiment in which the happenings are framed once-for-all to produce the end-in-view. Life also has its chance, luck, surprise, caprice, fortune, and when one no longer hopes to encounter these fortuitous circumstances, then the thrill of life is ebbing, the courage of desire is sinking, and the ultimate denouncement is not far distant. But life should be an opportunity for fulfillment, and if we are prepared to take a chance on chance, it may enter like a catalyst to enrich our purpose."

All in all, "Appointment with Fortune" is a wonderful book. Freethinkers should be proud to have among their friends such a gifted author and outstanding scholar. This book belongs in the library of every Free thinker.

Walter Hoops

247 pages, cloth. $3.75, incl. handling charge.

MORALS WITHOUT RELIGION

by MARGARET KNIGHT

(Dennis Dobson, Ltd., London) $1.25

This small book of 124 pages contains a wealth of rationalist thinking and speaking. Mrs. Knight, who calls herself a Scientific-Humanist, addressed a radio audience on the British Broadcasting System in January 1955 on the subject of "Morals Without Religion". Mrs. Knight includes the scripts of two of her talks, the reaction from the press and public and several other essays pertaining to the topic of this book. She is a well-known English psychologist who is courageous and determined in her devotion to rationalist thinking. She tells of her attempts to present a radio talk and the fact that, as she expresses it, "I was prepared to make a nuisance of myself . . ." convinced the B.B.C. of her determination and sincerity.

Her first talk dealt primarily with the right to doubt the existence of God and that, in view of the increasing differences between Science and Religion, it is a mistake to impose these God ideas upon children. Her second talk was concerned with the positive rather than the negative aspect dealing with how humanist parents should set about the moral education of their children.

Mrs. Knight is meeting a definite need in society today where juvenile delinquency is on the rise, by logical and helpful suggestions to parents, many of whom are searching desperately to find some way to teach their children morality, yet are unable to believe, themselves, in Christian theology. Yet despite this fact the first reaction of the press and the religious groups was one of outrage and indignation that Mrs. Knight should have been allowed to make this broadcast. The later reaction, however, was more favorable and in the chapter "The Reaction", Mrs. Knight deals fully with the results of her talks, including statistics regarding letters she received.

As well as discussing morality of adults and children, Mrs. Knight touches briefly on Communism and religion. She says in part:

"To try to combat communism by reviving Christianity is a hopeless task. It is like — what shall I say? — like trying to combat the belief in flying saucers by reviving the belief in witches riding on broomsticks. I do not want to press that analogy too closely (but what I mean is it is trying to drive out a new myth by reviving an old

one, instead of going forward to something sounder than myth."

Mrs. Knight has given the entire movement a tremendous boost by her courage and calm presentation of a subject that in our day of orthodoxy is scarcely, if ever, discussed publicly. We owe it to ourselves to read this book. N. S.

OF GOD, THE DEVIL AND THE JEWS

by DAGOBERT D. RUNES

In this book the author holds up a mirror in which is reflected a picture of western civilization which will cause a good many peope to think and that in itself is an accomplishment.

On the dust cover is the following notation: "Wrought with deep moral passion and an exquisite sense of justice out of a life of thinking, written by a scholar, distinguished for the originality and beauty of his thought, this book is a powerful and profound ethical indictment of the Western World and the lies and contradictions which corrode and must in time crumble the foundations of its culture."

The book lives up to this promise. It is an excellent work for the advancement of freethought and should be not so much in your library as in the hands of someone you wish to free from the bonds of orthodox superstition. This is the type of book you can lend to your neighbor and he will thank you for giving him a chance to become acquainted with the thoughts of a wonderful man.

Samuel Hill

Dr. J. M. Wilson, staunch freethinker for 60 years, died June 23 in San Diego at the age of 84. He wrote "Religion a Primitive Fable," "How a Shock Cured Blindness" and "The Other Side." All popular pamphlets and booklets, humorously but firmly presenting the other side to religious beliefs.

They set forth the rationalist viewpoint clearly and without antagonism. Dr. Wilson wrote material presenting the general rationalist viewpoint which could be bought at 10c and 25c.

He is survived by a brother and three Daughters and his excellent writings. He was a close friend of James Hervey Johnson and a member of the Freethinkers Society of San Diego.

He took an interest in his work until the last. Nearly 5000 of his writings were sold and one order from a previous reader for all of the remaining copies of "The Other Side" was received in time to give him much satisfaction.

RATIONALIST PUBLICATIONS CONFERENCE AT ST. LOUIS OFFICE

Seated left to right: Walter Hoops, Boyd Wamack, James Kaigler, Beatrice Gmerek, and Eugene Hoffman. Standing, left to right, George Flagier, Pat O'Connor, Otto Soukup, Arthur B. Hewson, Victor Cejka, Eldon Scholl and Arnold Safron.

RELIGION ON THE AIR

SIR,—Disregarding the facts adduced in my article, Mr. Oliver Ford deplores what the strangely describes as its "strongly emotional tone." He is evidently a Sensitive Type; he must have suffered acutely when he read some of the articles written by his fellow-Christians after my broadcasts.

Mr. Lord is puzzled to know why I, who am not a Christian, should want to discuss Christianity. The only possible explanation, he thinks, is that I must wish to replace Christian dogma by an equally dogmatic atheism. But Scientific Humanists do not deal in dogmas; all that they want is the right of free discussion.

A present, the most powerful instrument of mass indoctrination that has ever existed—sound and television broadcasting—has been mobilised in the service of Christionity. Day in and day out, it employs skilled propaganda techniques to induce people to continue paying lip-service to doctrines that, for the most part, they have ceased to believe. Scientific Humanism offers a constructive alternative to these discarded beliefs, and to the sanctions derived from them; but it is seldom allowed to state its case on the air. It is perhaps a crude question, but if Christians are so sure they are right, why are they so afraid to allow their opponents a hearing?

One other point. Mr. Ford says that belief in a Supreme Being accords with "the whole experience of mankind throughout the ages." So, for a long time, did belief in witches.

MARGARET KNIGHT

Hope House,
Bucksburn, Aberdeenshire
—from "New Statesman and Nation."

•

Civilization will thrive when the last stone, from the last church, falls on the last priest.
—Emile Zola.

66 quotus

from the Freethought publications of the world

from LITERARY GUIDE:

In a scientific age one would expect to find a Science Party—that is to say, a group of people impatient of traditional labels and concerned only to discover the best way of utilizing our resources. Instead, we find the opposite—clerical parties (either functioning openly or as pressure groups) busily sabotaging such efforts. The problems of the modern world cannot be solved by prescriptions derived from the Middle Ages or the dying Roman Empire. Today we overcome an invasion of locusts with aeroplanes, not miracles. Lunatics are treated by psychiatrists, not exorcists. Famines are fought by building dams and using tractors, and the prayer wheels spin in vain. We know the answer to all manner of questions that are still needlessly debated. We know that a white skin does not confer superiority, that hanging is no deterrent to murderers, that the devil is often only a ductless gland. There is a great deal, of course, that we do not yet know, but at least we are equipped with the technique for finding out. If we apply this technique as widely as possible, there will still be paradise, but the world will be a much better place to live in than ever before.

from THE ATHEIST:

One who accepts a deity on blind "faith" and avoids discussion has less of a burden to carry than the one who tries to prove his existence by argumentation. Once the latter is asked to define the word "God," or what the word means to him, his troubles begin.

from FREE MIND:

Humanists in America vary greatly in basic interests but two ideas seem to be at the heart of American Humanism at this time, a belief in the value of the individual human being and a reliance on scientific method in problem solving. In general they see man as an integral part of nature and accept the world view given by modern science. Some regard the method used for reaching conclusions as more important than the conclusions reached. . . . We are coming to realize that the question of whether humanism is to be thought of as a philosophy, as a religion, or as a way of life, is largely a matter of personal temperament and preference.

from THE RADICAL HUMANIST:

We have a new and different attitude to life. We are opposed to the ascetic and authoritarian attitude to life which has prevailed in this country for centuries. Our attitude will not easily be understood and accepted by the people. Yet it is necessary that they understand and appreciate it before we can expect any social change to take place. And that is what Radical Humanists achieved in this part of the country.

from THE AGE OF REASON MAGAZINE:

Getting something for nothing is indecent, and one of the lower morals to which a human being can stoop is begging,

especially if he is physically and mentally able to earn a living; such a character is the scum of the earth and should be ignored by all decent people. This is one class of the human family who is constantly praying to God to give them something which they have not earned. The sooner one learns to be honest, unselfish, industrious, doing all the good he can for the good of society and his fellow men and working for the good of his country, the sooned will that man have the good things of life. This is the way out, not begging from man nor God.

■

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FREETHINKERS ON STAMPS

If you have an active mind and are at all interested in history and geography, and recreational activities have become humdrum and/or too strenuous and you subconsciously seek something which would keep your mind sharp while soothing your frayed nerves you should take up stamp-collecting. It is recreational and occupational therapy and will bring you in touch with many interesting people.

Postage stamps have been in use over a century ,in our country since 1847. Around a half million different stamps have been issued throughout the world. Of course no collector has them all, in fact, it is hard to keep up with new issues, so instead of, or in addition to a general collection start a **Topical** — a special collection of stamps depicting animals, birds, flowers, etc. On the 75th anniversary of the Universal Postal Union almost every country in the world issued one or more stamps in commemoration of the occasion and they would make a very fine and valuable collection.

An architect could go in for fine public buildings, an engineer for bridges and dams, the religious for churches. For the Rationalist I suggest collecting stamps honoring those of the world's immortals who were Rationalists. There are many; among them: Burbank, Bolivar, Bjornson, Beethoven, Brahms, Lord Byron, Mme. Curie, Clement, Copernicus, Clemenceau, Dumas, Dunant, Einstein, Emerson, Anatole France, Flaubert, Grant, Goethe, Garibaldi, Heine, Hugo, Ibsen, Jefferson, Jaures, Juarez, Lincoln, Longfellow, Lowell, Lessing, Madison, Mozart, Mazzini, Nansen, Poe, Pasteur, Pestalozzi Pushkin, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Voltaire, Verdi, Washington, Whitman.

J. Mark,
Phoenix, Arizona

we honor . . .

SIGMUND FREUD

On May 6th all over the world the 100th anniversary of Freud's birthday was celebrated. His basic principles and discoveries have triumphed over tremendous opposition, ridicule and persecution. To many he is one of the greatest liberators of the human mind.

There was no room for a God in Freud's philosophy. He had investigated the origin of religion and culture in his work **Totem and Tabu** and in his brilliant study **The Future of an Illusion** he had laid bare the foundation of all religions: fear. He calls belief an illusion when wishfulfilment is a prominent factor in its motivation. He points out tha t"some of the religious doctrines are so improbable, so very incompatible with everything we have laboriously discovered about the reality of the world, that we compare them with delusions." At another place he has this to say about religious education: "Think of the distressing contrast between the radiant intelligence of a healthy child and the feeble mentality of the average adult. Is it so utterly impossible that it is just a religious upbringing which is largely to blame for the relative degeneration?" Freud saw man's basic problem in his concepts of morality based on a religious interpretation of sin. Himself, an atheist, he defined religion as a "mass obsessional neurosis".

All modern psychology and psychiatry is based on the explanations of the unconscious, first discovered by Sigmund Freud. His researches have influenced practically evvery human activity from education to art to picking a job and choosing a course of study. Freud was not a philosopher in the regular sense of the word; he was, as the poet W. H. Auden said:

If often he was wrong and at times absurd,
To us he is no more a person now
but a whole climate of opinion

Sigmund Freud lived in Vienna almost all his life and was actually ransomed for a quarter of a million shillings by Princess Marie Bonaparte when the Nazis invaded Austria. He went to London where he died in 1939. He was a member of the Rationalist Press Association of London.

HEINRICH HEINE

When Heinrich Heine died on February 17th in Paris one hundred years ago, Germany's liberal writers and poets were exiles in France, Italy and England. The **fatherland,** after the unsuccessful revolution in 1848 had become a large prison, crushed under the Prussian military boot. The coming hegemony of the Prussians in the affairs of Germany could clearly be foreseen.

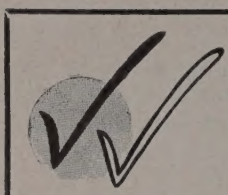
Heine loved Germany; he had traveled far and wide and had written his delightful and sprightly **Reisebilder** (travel pictures). His lyrics showed a deep feeling and understanding of the German tongue; their unwonted grace had captivated the continent.

But it is Heinrich Heine the "Son of the **Revolution"** that is better known among freethinkers. Tyranny ad clericalism were twin evils to him and provoked his most biting satire. It was only natural that princes and prelates became the favorite target of his scorn and sarcasm. No wonder his books were suppressed; he was forbidden to return to his homeland. (The Nazi-regime published his famous poem **Die Lorelei** with the notation **Author Unknown).** But Heine's popularity never waned; many of his poems were set to music and have become folk songs. The people did not care whether Heinrich Heine was Jewish; they kept loving him by claiming him as one of their most gifted sons.

On the night before he died, a friend asked whether Heine wanted to make his "peace with God" to which the poet replied: "Don't trouble yourself, God will pardon me. That's his trade." Heine had long before settled this question in the last lines of one of his best poems:

> The heavens we shall gladly leave to
> the angels and the sparrows.

—WALTER HOOPS



CHECK *and* DOUBLE CHECK *by* 'CHEKA'

Here Is Number Three, Friends!

Well ,well, the third issue of the AR is out.. Yes, friends, this is it. Now run thru its pages, read every line of its contents and then tell us what you think of it. Thanks again for all the greetings and the hundreds of addresses sent in. It made it possible for the publishing group to go over its first hurdle. Now, if we don't let down on this splendid cooperation in building a Rationalist Magazine we can go over the thousand mark by the time issue number four rolls around. Of course more than two thousand copies are sent to Rationalists and their families every two months. So, let's keep on doing this good work and hit that thousand in November sure.

For Only Twenty Addresses

Yes, for only twenty names and addresses or three paid subscriptions, the American Rationalist will give a free copy of "Superior Men" donated by our reader James Hervey Johnson of San Diego, Calif. Many readers have written in asking us how they can help us make the AR not only the best looking, but also the finest-all-around freethought magazine. Here's your chance.

A Bouquet Is In Order!

In a few words indeed, but congratulations are in order to our Philadelphia Freethinkers and Rationalists upon the purchase and establishment of the Thomas Paine Centre. A dream of many that became a reality. We say, "Freethought on the March".

A Printshop serving the Rationalist Cause

Now that we have a printing plant organized to serve our movement, we are proud to forecast the publication of the first pamphlet. The booklet, "POPE JOAN" a riddle of the Dark Ages was written by Sam Dicks. I am sure that everybody will want to get this splendid pamphlet. Order your copy today. Price is only 15c per one, four for 50c.

Another Printing Enterprise . . .

Six lively, comic postal cards drawn by the art editor of the American Rationalist Ottokar Soukup, printed on clear kromekote stock are ready for the readers. They are priced at 5c apiece or all six for 25c. Send for them today, so you can start sending them to your friends.

Greetings . . .

The American Rationalist Federation will hold its first annual convention since it organized last fall. The national meeting will be held in St. Louis on October 27-28. May we take this opportunity to congratulate all the Freethinkers and Rationalists from every corner of America that will meet at the St. Louis Convention of the ARF upon their endeavor in building a strong Rationalist movement. The American Rationalist Federation deserves all the support it can get for championing the struggle of Rationalism. May all your undertakings be crowned with all-around success.

New departments . . .

When you go thru the pages of this issue of the AR you will note that we started a Hobby Column, Speaking the Esperanto, At Random, What's Your Problem. We know that this will make the magazine more interesting . . . after all, isn't that what we pledged ourselves to? Tell us, what you think of these special features. Tell us in your own words how we can make the AR even better. Drop us a line.

So . . .

So, checking, and double checking our work for the past two months and the forecast for the next couple of months . . . so, I'm checking out . . .

victor cejka

•

From the Constitution of the Milwaukee Turners, organized 1853:

In matters of religion and conscience, especially, striving for the dissemination of a philosophy based on the ever-growing knowledge of natural forces, we demand freedom and tolerance in the broadest sense. Believing in the well-established American principle that state and church should be kept separate, we oppose any interference by sectarian bodies in political affairs. Attempts to debar the people from rational amusement and recreation on Sundays, the employment of religious functionaries paid out of public moneys, the exemption of church property taxation, and all similar tendancies to impose upon the state the support or recognition of any creed or denomination, we protest against with solemn and sincere concern.

•

Henry Brougham: To tyrants, indeed, and bad rulers, the progress of knowledge among the mass of mankind is a just object of terror: it is fatal to them and their designs. (Practical Observations upon the Education of the People, 1825)

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